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Beauty for Ashes  
or  
Consolation for the Bereaved



Rev. William C. Wilbur, Ph.D.

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# BEAUTY FOR ASHES

OR

## CONSOLATION FOR THE BEREAVED

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By REV. WILLIAM C. WILBOR, Ph.D.

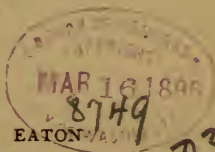
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
BISHOP JOHN HEYL VINCENT

He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, . . . to comfort all that mourn; . . . to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.—Isa. 61. 1-3



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## PREFACE.

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MY apology for adding another book of consolation to the number of like publications, and of imitating such models as have before found favor with the sorrowing, is twofold.

First, the wealth of such literature ever increases, and, like the ripe harvest, ought to be gathered, even though the granary seem already quite full.

Second, an important part of every true pastor's labor is to comfort those that mourn. It is with the devout hope that among the varied selections here offered ministers may find some aid in cheering the sorrowing that this little volume is sent forth.

To those whom I have sought to help in their bereavement these messages are affectionately dedicated, with the earnest desire that among them some words of blessing, comfort, faith, and hope may be found.

WILLIAM C. WILBOR.

OLEAN, N. Y., *December*, 1895.





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## INTRODUCTION.

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WE must all die. We who are in the body must leave it. And that is death. The law is universal. For all we love best graves must open. The earth claims our dust, and it takes but little space to hide it. "The sea," as wild Walt Whitman says, "is full of ready-made graves."

But it is a glorious thing that graves on land or at sea cannot hold us, for when they open below gates open above, and we enter the other life. Death is life. "Absent from the body," (poor, silent, deaf, dead things that we leave!) "present with the Lord!"

Of course it is hard to die as we view death from the one side—the earth side. We know so little. We can know so little. Parting for a week almost breaks a child's heart. And a strong man who crosses the sea for a year brushes the tears from his eyes when he says good-bye to his best beloved. He goes *so* far! And why not the sense of loneliness and bereavement when the soul weighs anchor

and crosses from the continent of Matter to the mysterious shores of Reality?

If we knew too much and thought too much about the land beyond we should be fitted for little here. And we should not be missed at the parting. Nor would a reunion be coveted greatly by those we leave.

God has done well in that he has hidden so much; seeing that he has revealed so much, and given us hunger for immortality and hope and confidence!

The thoughts that console us at the time of temporary separation are in this little volume wisely and delicately compiled, that all classes of "those who mourn" may have the comfort which the inspiration of God has given, both in his written word and in the rich experience of souls who have come under the spell and power of his Holy Spirit.

JOHN H. VINCENT.

CHAUTAUQUA, 1895.

“COMFORT ALL THAT MOURN.”

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them.

—Rev. 14. 13.

God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave : for he shall receive me.—Psalm 49. 15.

We know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.—2 Cor. 5. 1.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting : for that is the end of all men ; and the living will lay it to his heart.—Eccl. 7. 2.

Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.

—Matt. 5. 4.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

—Psalm 116. 15.

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.—Rev. 21. 4.

# BEAUTY FOR ASHES ;

OR,

## CONSOLATION FOR THE BEREAVED.

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### DEEP GRIEF.

O THAT they would not comfort me !

Deep grief cannot be reached ;  
Wisdom, to cure a broken heart,  
Must not be wisdom preached.

Deep grief is better let alone ;  
Voices to it are swords ;  
A silent look will soothe it more  
Than the tenderness of words.

Deep grief is not a past event ;  
It is a life, a state,  
Which habit makes more terrible  
And age more desolate.

But am I comfortless? O no!  
Jesus this pathway trod ;  
And deeper in my soul than grief  
Art thou, my dearest God!—F. W. FABER.

**"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN."**

DEEM not that they are blest alone  
Whose days a peaceful tenor keep;  
The anointed Son of God makes known  
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again  
The lids that overflow with tears;  
And weary hours of woe and pain  
Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest  
For every dark and troubled night;  
And grief may bide an evening guest,  
But joy shall come with early light.

Nor let the good man's trust depart,  
Though life its common gifts deny,  
Though with a pierced and broken heart,  
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

For God has marked each sorrowing day,  
And numbered every secret tear;  
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay  
For all his children suffer here.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

REMEMBER now and always that life is no idle dream, but a solemn reality based upon eternity. Find out your task; stand to it; the night cometh when no man can work.—CARLYLE.



## HOLY GROUND.

EARTH's holiest places are her graves. All that is tender and sacred about the human affections clusters about the burial places of those we have loved. The resting place of the dead is of all the fields of earth consecrated to God. As we enter God's acre thoughts of the world, its cares and ambitions, its strifes and annoyances, are all shut out, and we seem to be nearer to God because we are near to the forms of those who have gone to be with him. No wonder that the bereaved love to place fresh flowers, the pledges of resurrection, upon the grassy couches of those whom Christ when he comes will bring with him.

## THE BEYOND.

It seemeth such a little way to me,  
Across to that strange country, the Beyond;  
And yet not strange, for it has grown to be  
The home of those of whom I am so fond;  
They make it seem familiar and most dear,  
As journeying friends bring distant countries near.  
So close it lies that, when my sight is clear,  
I think I see the brightly gleaming strand;  
I know, I feel that those who've gone from here  
Come near enough to touch my hand.  
I often think, but for our veiled eyes,  
We should find heaven round about us lies.

I cannot make it seem a day to dread  
When from this dear earth I shall journey out  
To that still dearer country of the dead,  
And join the lost ones so long dreamed about.  
I love this world, yet shall I love to go  
And meet the friends who wait for me, I know.

I never stand about a bier and see  
The seal of death set on some well-loved face,  
But that I think, one more to welcome me  
When I shall cross the intervening space  
Between this land and that one over there—  
One more to make the strange beyond seem fair.

And so for me there is no sting to death,  
And so the grave has lost its victory;  
It is but crossing, with abated breath  
And white, set face, a little strip of sea,  
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,  
More beautiful, more precious than before.

—*Anon.*

LIFE is not a series of unconnected accidents,  
but a great and solemn stewardship leading up to  
judgment, to penalty or reward.—JOSEPH PARKER.

BEHIND the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch  
above his own.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

INFANCY.

Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 18. 2, 3.

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. . . . And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.—Mark 10. 14, 16.

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.—Matt. 18. 10.

It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.—Matt. 18. 14.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.—Psalm 103. 13.

## THE DEEPEST GRIEF.

THERE is many a Rachel mourning for her idol, and many an empty pillow upon which a sweet baby face once rested. And there is no grief so deep and hard to keep from the memory as when the loving child trips away with the angel throng. We can better forget all other vanished forms, we can hide away more cheerfully the white faces in the churchyard, we can forget with less regret the music of friendly voices, but the memory of the little child clings to us like the undying fragrance of heavenly flowers. We do not just know why, but suppose it must be because a child is a part of heaven, and what is born of God can never die. Heavenly things are so out of place in this world that the Father in his loving mercy takes very often the sinless child to himself.

There are so many things that we forget when our little ones drift away from us into the silent life that if not reminded of them we should sink beneath the load. If no one whispered in our ear the story upon the bright side of the dark mystery we should become hard-hearted, and bitterness would take the place of contrite submission. Blessed are the lips which speak of the holier plane from which we look at things that the world calls mysteries. Blessed is the hand that leads the pale mourner away from the grave of mourned hopes, and points

to the eternal life in which every sweet baby spirit  
that ever drifted from this world is found.

—MRS. M. A. HOLT.

### THE PITCHER OF TEARS.

THE woman had closed her eyes,  
A-weary with weeping;  
She leaned on the empty cradle,  
And sobbed in her sleeping.  
Her breast, like the wave of the sea,  
Was rising and falling;  
Her heart, through the mist of sleep,  
On her baby was calling.  
Then her soul was lifted away  
To the garden of heaven,  
Where flowers shine like stars in the grass,  
So smooth and so even;  
And she saw where 'mid roses and May  
An angel did wander,  
With bright children, who looked in his face  
To dream and to wonder.  
Alone, and apart from the rest,  
A little child tarried,  
And in his small arms, soft and round,  
A pitcher he carried.  
His sweet eyes looked wistfully toward  
His mates in the meadow;  
Heaven's glory was bright, but his face  
Bore the touch of earth's shadow.

The woman knelt down where she stood.

“My own and my dearie,  
Now why do you wander alone,  
With little feet weary?  
If you cannot come back, come back,  
To the arms of your mother,  
’Tis your sweet hand the angel should hold,  
And never another.”

“O! mother, the pitcher of tears,  
Your tears, I must carry;  
So heavy it weighs, that behind  
I linger and tarry.  
O! mother, if you would smile,  
And cease from your weeping,  
My place by the angel’s side  
I’d gladly be keeping.”

The woman waked by the cradle,  
And smiled in the waking.  
“My baby, the pitcher of tears  
To my heart I am taking.  
Go, frolic and sing with your mates;  
My smiles shall be given  
To make a new light round your head  
In the garden of heaven.”

—LAURA E. RICHARDS.

O, RACHEL! cease thy weeping; they rest from pains  
and cares.

Lord, grant us hearts as guileless, and crowns as  
bright as theirs.—*Anon.*

## THE BLOSSOMS FALL.

How many blossoms fall from the orchard trees, how few remain for full fruition ! Yet we are thankful for the bright, fragrant blossoms that fall. They serve a noble purpose. They lend to the glad springtime so much of beauty and sweetness that we cannot say they have bloomed in vain.

So, too, of the many children who come to gladden human homes, how few stay on earth to reach maturity ! How many fall into springtime graves ! And they have not lived in vain ; their blossom-forms brought brightness and joy and blessing even though they faded so quickly, and their memory is a precious legacy of the heart.

## WHY THE BABY CAME.

PILLOWED on flowers, with a half-open bud in his tiny hand, the baby lay, a beautiful image of repose. Nothing could be lovelier than the delicate face, the little lips just parted, the white brow just shaded by soft, silken curls. There was nothing of the repulsion from death, which some people always suffer beside a corpse, to be felt by the most sensitive here. As beautiful now as he ever had been in his brief, sweet life, the darling seemed to be asleep.

But it was a frozen sleep. The strong man, pale with suppressed emotion, was one who had felt the fountains of fatherhood stirred for the first time



when the little one uttered his first feeble cry. The mother, leaning on his strength now, because grief had crushed all her own, had been thrilled with the highest joy of womanhood when this nursling was given her six months ago. Everything was over now. The little garments must be folded up and put away. There would be no need of waking in the night to take care of baby. Baby was gone.

Why did the baby come, if it was so soon to be taken ?

You may notice that you seldom hear this question from the lips of a mother. She is glad, away down to the profoundest depths of her wounded heart, that she had the child, though it be removed from her arms. She is glad to wear the mother's crown, though it be a crown of thorns.

To the inquirer may this answer be made: The baby came for two great reasons. One was that he might broaden and enlarge the whole life-sweep of all who loved him. Their care for him gave them a comprehension of the mystery of childhood, and a feeling of the fatherhood of God, that without him they might never have possessed.

The other was that the little spirit, flying heavenward, might draw by a slender silver thread, invisible but never slackening, the hearts of father and mother to the land where He dwells, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. The baby came not in vain.—*Anon.*

## BETTER THAN MARBLE.

It is related that a person on opening the grave of an infant that had been dead several years, to remove it to another cemetery, found that, by some kindly chemistry, nature had changed the babe to a beautiful statue of marble, retaining every part and feature in such perfection that it might have been used to adorn any parlor. O ye whose loved ones still sleep in unopened graves, be of good courage. The great Alchemist, Christ Jesus, shall by and by come and speak the word of resurrection, and the forms you so fondly cherish shall reappear, not as beautiful statues of marble, but living, incorruptible, glorious, to gladden your lives with sweet companionship forever.

I FEEL that repeated afflictions come not as the lightning on the scathed tree, blasting it yet more and more, but as the strokes of the sculptor on the marble block, forming it into the image of beauty and loveliness.—H. W. BEECHER.

MEASURE thy life by loss instead of gain;  
Not by the wine drunk, but by the wine poured  
forth;  
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice;  
And who suffers most has most to give.

—UGO BASSI'S SERMON.

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.—1 Thess. 4. 13, 14.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.

—Psalm 55. 22.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.—Matt. 11. 28.

I am the resurrection, and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.—John 11. 25, 26.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness : I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.—Psalm 17. 15.

I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.—Rom. 8. 18.

## SORROW IS WORLD-WIDE.

BEREAVEMENT, disappointment, loss, are universal experiences. In the oriental legend the young mother brought her dead firstborn to the holy Brahman and besought him to restore her child to life. The good man bade her go from house to house and ask this question: "Has sorrow ever crossed this threshold?" and when she found a home into which no grief had ever come he would restore her child to life. Eagerly the mother flew from door to door, but always the same answer came, with many tears and sobs, until she saw that earth was full of sorrow—that she had not been singled out for the sad affliction. And in the sympathy which all this common woe aroused in her for other sufferers, and in them for her, she read the lesson the Brahman meant to teach, and returned to bear with fortitude and resignation her own sorrow.

## THE MOTHER OF AN ANGEL.

THERE is nothing, I think, in all the world that can put the stimulus for higher and sweeter living into the heart more surely than the proud consciousness of a bereaved mother that she has been counted worthy to become the mother of an angel! What falterings can be possible to one who has such a prize at the end of the goal? What backslidings or unworthiness can clog the onward way of a mother

who has a child in heaven to press onward to meet? Gone forever the aptitude for debasing things and the desire for any gratifications of sense and caprice when she knows that among the hidden throng who watch and love in the shrouded skies there is one little angel who is her very own, one whose glorified face watches like a steadfast star for the drawing near of her pilgrim feet to that mysterious gate which only a dying breath shall waft ajar.—*Anon.*

### SHORT LIVES NOT FRUITLESS.

To those who have lost dear friends in the bloom of early life or in the opening career of usefulness it is hard to understand the mystery of such apparent waste of talent, culture, ability. But when we reverently repeat the familiar phrase, "I believe in the life everlasting," we catch a glimpse through the soul-vision of possibilities beyond this limited sphere of earthly life. Duration is not the measure of usefulness. Many brief lives are more full of labors and results than other lives which round out a good old age. Many who depart hence before full maturity leave behind them more lasting influences to bless mankind and shape human thought and life than large numbers who reach the allotted time of human expectation. Nothing has been lost to Christianity by the martyrdoms that have cut off the early saints, who, by dying, have left behind them so hal-

lowed an influence. Short lives are not fruitless, because all the preparations for useful life here surely go with them to the larger sphere of activity in the limitless, endless realm of God.

### A YEAR IN HEAVEN.

A YEAR in heaven for her. What is she learning  
Of holy things, of things divine and true?  
What glorious visions there are still unfolding  
Which here she never knew?

Did angel friends await her at her coming?  
Did angel faces greet her with a smile?  
Were all the dear ones eager to receive her  
Whom she had lost awhile?

A year on earth for us without her presence—  
A year of loneliness and grief and pain;  
But still we smile amid our tears in thinking  
Our loss is but her gain.

We miss her in our joys and in our sorrows;  
She was our life, our center, and our sun;  
And yet we would not call her back, but whisper,  
“O God, thy will be done!”

For heaven and earth are very close together;  
Though she is there, she is not far away;  
She could not leave the dear ones, loved so fondly,  
Even in heaven to stay!

But still her spirit, like a guardian angel,  
Is bending o'er us with her own fond care;  
And sometimes she brings heaven so very near us  
We almost think we're there.

A year in heaven for her, of rest and blessing;  
For us a year on earth, with her above;  
But heaven and earth are both together blending,  
And over all is Love!—*Anon.*

### QUESTIONINGS.

WHY do the children leave us, O our Father,  
The little children cradled on our breasts?  
Why do our doves fly upward in the morning  
While other birdlings sleep within the nest?  
Can it be true that music up in heaven  
Is sweeter when their voices join the hymn?  
Is richer light to realms of glory given  
For that which fading left our homes so dim?

And can the angels, who all day are giving  
Care to the lambs within the shepherd's fold,  
Need, as a mother needs amid her grieving,  
The little ones at night to clasp and hold?  
When shall we see again the precious faces  
That gave our homes such sunshine when they  
smiled?

O, what shall fill the heart's sad vacant places,  
Or hush the tones that plead, "Give back the  
child?"



Why must we listen vainly for the patter  
Of little feet at morning on the stair,  
And miss the merry sound of childish laughter,  
Or gentler tones saying the evening prayer  
From lips that said their "Good night" at our knees?  
O, He who made the mother-heart hath surely  
No chiding in his own for thoughts like these.

In wrath or mercy? Only he can tell.

Perhaps in some sweet way there may be written  
Upon our hearts this record, "It is well."

Perhaps the broken harps that thrill and quiver  
Through all the night, under the hand of pain,  
May, in the morning of a glad forever,  
Wake 'neath God's touch to melody again.

—MARY LOWE DICKINSON.

## THE INVISIBLE CHILDREN.

IT is not when your children are with you, it is not when you see them and hear them, that they are most to you; it is when the sad assembly is gone; it is when the daisies have resumed their growing again in the place where the little form was laid; it is when you have carried your children out, and said farewell, and come home again, and day and night are full of sweet memories; it is when summer and winter are full of touches and suggestions of them; it is when you cannot look up toward God without thinking of them, nor look down toward yourself

and not think of them; it is when they have gone out of your arms, and are living to you only by the power of the imagination, that they are the most to you.

The invisible children are the realest children, the sweetest children, the truest children, the children that touch our hearts as no hands of flesh ever could touch them.—H. W. BEECHER.

### RESIGNATION.

SHE is not dead—the child of our affection—

But gone unto that school

Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,

By guardian angels led,

Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing

In those bright realms of air;

Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,  
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken

The bond which nature gives,

Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,  
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;  
For when, with raptures wild,  
In our embraces we again enfold her  
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,  
Clothed with celestial grace;  
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion  
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times, impetuous with emotion  
And anguish long suppressed,  
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,  
That cannot be at rest,

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling  
We may not wholly stay;  
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,  
The grief that must have way.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;  
Amid these earthly damps  
What seems to us but sad, funereal tapers  
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death! What seems so is transition.  
This life of mortal breath  
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,  
Whose portals we call Death.

## ONE MOMENT.

ONE moment, the sob of parting anguish; the next, the great, deep swell of the angels' song. Never think, reader, that the dear ones you have seen die had far to go to meet God after they parted from you. Never think, parents, who have seen your children die, that after they left you they had to traverse a dark, solitary way, along which you would have liked, if it had been possible, to lead them by the hand, and bear them company till they came into the presence of God. You did so if you stood by them till the last breath was drawn. You did bear them company into God's very presence if you only stayed beside them till they died. The moment they left you they were with him. The slight pressure of the cold fingers lingered with you yet, but the little child was with his Saviour.

—COUNTRY PARSON.

O BLESSED sleep! that will not break  
For tears, nor prayers, nor love's sweet sake;  
O perfect rest! that knows no pain,  
No throb, no thrill of heart or brain;  
O life sublime beyond all speech,  
That only the pure through dying reach!  
God understands, and his ways are right;  
Bid his beloved a fond good night.—*Anon.*

# MATURITY.

Thou carriest them away as with a flood ; they are as a sleep : in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up ; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.—Psalm 90. 5, 6.

The Lord will not cast off forever : but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

—Lam. 3. 31, 32.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you : but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings ; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

—1 Peter 4. 12, 13.

Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.—Isa. 25. 4.

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

—Psalm 30. 5.

## SOLILOQUY ON DEATH.

How unexpected death always is until it comes to one whom we have known. It seems like something strange and far away, something that lies quite outside the range and circle of our lives. Yet when death comes we know the separation is only for a little while; that somewhere, somehow we shall see the dear face again. God help those who, when the loved form is carried out from the home, when the words, the face of the dear one are nothing but a memory, have no hope of a reunion; whose eyes cannot look across the black gulf of death to the bright shore of heaven! If there is anything that would make a doubting soul cling to the Christian religion it is the promise that it gives of a life beyond this earth. Our hearts cannot give up our dead. Something tells us that this is not all, that the souls that we have known and loved we shall know and love again.—T. B. L.

GOD would never let us long for our friends with such a strong and holy love, if they were not waiting for us.—WILLIAM MOUNTFORD.

THEY that descend into the mines of suffering find unbounded riches there.

Those who dive into the depths of grief find the pearls of everlasting life within its caverns.

—SPURGEON.

OUR life is a dream; our time, as a stream,  
Glides swiftly away,  
And the fugitive moment refuses to stay.  
The arrow is flown—the moment is gone;  
The millennial year  
Rushes on to our view, and eternity's here.

—CHARLES WESLEY.

### MEMORY, LOVE, HOPE.

To those whose loved ones have been glorified there is left an imperishable legacy of memory, love, and hope.

Nothing can rob the heart of sweet recollection of the happy years that have been wrought into life's history. The loving words, the gentle deeds, the sympathy and appreciation that have enriched our experiences—these and other remembrances are ours to cherish and cultivate. Love itself cannot die while memory endures. They are our loved ones still, though hid from our sight. Love is an attribute of the soul, and readily enters the soul realm and awaits with patience the reunited life which hastens nearer with every setting sun.

Hope, too, holds out its promise of cheer and confidence, not vain deceit or cruel disappointment, but the promise that is sure and steadfast, and that enters within the veil.



## COMPENSATION.

WHAT though the kindly heart that loved so fondly this home circle has ceased to beat? That love, richer, deeper, unceasing, is yet the same in the life which she now lives with never a throb of pain. What though the hands which served others so patiently and willingly are now quietly folded and still? They will gladly serve the good Master in that larger life of service without weariness. What if the feet that were swift to run errands of kindness and mercy will walk no more the dusty, difficult ways of earth? They will walk without weariness the path of life, and roam unfettered the fields of paradise. What though the soul-sense that loved so passionately all that was true and beautiful here, and the gifted mind that could so highly appreciate the choicest of this world's blessings, are here no longer? They will drink deeply and forever in ecstasy of unwearied aspiration the fulfillment of every longing desire of mind and spirit in the realms of life eternal. She loved flowers, and has gone to dwell forever amid the beauties of the heavenly paradise and breathe the fragrance of flowers that never die. She loved music, and the voice that praised the Lord here will join unwearied in the chorus of the redeemed in glad hallelujahs around the throne of God forever and forever.

## MESSAGES.

WE stood on the verge of the ocean and waved farewell to our dearest friends and they sailed out of sight. Day after day passed in silence. No message came from the loved ones. But one night across the wide sea came a brief cablegram containing but two words from our friends: "Safe! Well!" They brought sweet assurance that the stormy voyage was over and our friends were safe at home.

So also, bereaved heart across the dark, wide, stormy sea of death on which your loved ones sailed away from you, if you will listen with the ear of Christian faith, out of God's holy word will come the same sweet message to your longing heart: "Safe!" "They are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." "Well!" "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

## A LITTLE WHILE.

WE cheerfully consent to let our most cherished friends go away from us with those they love, because it will increase their happiness. And so we allow our children to accept the invitations of our kindred to share the privilege of travel for long periods of time in distant lands for their profit and

improvement. Shall we not bear bravely our loss and bereavement when our Saviour takes them to be with him in paradise, and dry our tears and cease our grieving when we remember that they are now the guests of God?

### THE GUESTS OF GOD.

“Why should we wear black for the guests of God?”—RUSKIN.

FROM the dust of the weary highway,  
From the smart of sorrow's rod,  
Into the royal presence  
They are bidden as guests of God.  
The veil from their eyes is taken,  
Sweet mysteries they are shown,  
Their doubts and fears are over,  
For they know as they are known.

For them there should be rejoicing  
And festival array,  
As for the bride in her beauty  
Whom love hath taken away.  
Sweet hours of peaceful waiting,  
Till the path that we have trod  
Shall end at the Father's gateway,  
And we are the guests of God.

—MARY F. BUTTS.

## APPRECIATION FOR THE LIVING.

THE time to bestow praise and tender words of appreciation upon our friends is not only while we are breathing the fragrance of the beautiful flowers with which we deck their coffins, but while in the stress and pain of human suffering and despair they most crave our loving cheer and tender sympathy. The time to lavish wreaths and crosses and crowns of flowers upon them is when they are sorest pressed with the crosses of life, and struggling amid temptations and doubts to win the wreath-reward of the race of life and the heavenly crown of victory at the end of the strife with sin. Our praises and consolations are to be spoken not only in the sweet hymns of faith and hope and immortality which we sing over their insensible remains, but when the burdened heart is longing for sympathy, love, and appreciation, and while it can be comforted, refreshed, and strengthened by our tenderness and consideration.

. . . O, you,  
Earth's tender and impassioned few,  
Take courage to intrust your love  
To Him so named, who guards above  
Its ends, and shall fulfill!  
Breaking the narrow prayers, that may  
Befit your narrow hearts, away  
In his broad loving will.

—MRS. BROWNING.

So long thy power has blest me, sure it still  
    Will lead me on  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till  
    The night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces smile  
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile!

—JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

## LOVE AND DEATH.

. . . . .  
AND they? Do they, amid the host  
    That throng along the golden street,  
A moment pause—in memory lost—  
    And listen for our coming feet  
While angels all around rejoice?  
Remember they our earthly voice?  
O! can those pearly gates above  
Shut out from them our yearning love?

Or do they sometimes sit apart,  
    And ponder on the precious past?  
Remember they, with loving heart,  
    That trembling kiss—it was the last?  
They cannot sure forget its thrill;  
Its presence lingers round them still,  
For 'twas a soul—'twas not a breath—  
And Love is mightier than Death.

—JANE T. H. CROSS.

## FOLD YE THE ICE-COLD HANDS.

FOLD ye the ice-cold hands,  
Calm on the troubled breast;  
The toil of the summer day is o'er,  
Now cometh the evening rest.  
And the folded hands have nobly wrought  
Through noontide's din and strife,  
And the dauntless heart has bravely fought  
In the ceaseless war of life.

Smooth ye the time-thinned hair,  
Still on the marble brow;  
No earthly cloud doth linger there  
To mar its beauty now.  
But brow and lip and darkened eye  
Bear a shade of deep repose,  
As twilight shadows softly lie  
On the widespread winter snows.

No voice of discord wakes  
The silence still and deep,  
And the far-off sounds of worldly strife  
Cannot break the dreamless sleep.  
Welcome rest to heart long tossed  
On the tide of hopes and fears;  
To the feet that have wandered far and wide,  
O'er the weary waste of years.

From the gorgeous glare of day  
    Welcome the gentle night,  
Fading the tranquil lines away,  
    Solemn and calm and bright.  
Then tenderly fold the hands  
    In peace on the pulseless breast,  
For the evening shadows come quickly on,  
    And sweet is the Christian's rest.

—W. S. STUDLEY, D.D.

### THEY COME NO MORE.

Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,  
Those lighted faces smile no more.  
    We tread the paths their feet have worn,  
We sit beneath their orchard trees,  
We hear like them the hum of bees  
    And rustle of the bladed corn;  
We turn the pages that they read,  
    Their written words we linger o'er,  
But in the sun they cast no shade,  
No voice is heard, no sign is made,  
    No step is on the conscious floor!  
Yet Love will dream and Faith will trust  
(Since He who knows our need is just),  
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.  
Alas for him who never sees  
The stars shine through his cypress trees!

Who hopeless lays his dead away,  
Nor looks to see the breaking day  
Across the mournful marbles play!  
Who hath not learned in hours of faith  
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
That Life is ever Lord of Death,  
And Love can never lose its own.

—JOHN G. WHITTIER.

### DEATH OF A MOTHER.

It is my belief that, as a rule, a man never receives from any human source a love so near divine as that which comes to him from his mother. The love he receives from his father is not likely to be so strong, so intense, so tenacious. The love bestowed upon him by the wife of his youth, however true and fervent, will be less disinterested and imperishable than that bestowed by his mother. It is his mother's love that protects his infancy and blesses his boyhood, and, go where he may in after life, or do what he may, that same love follows him through all his wanderings and abides with him through all the fluctuations of fortune. If he succeeds, no other will so proudly rejoice in his triumphs; if he fails, no other will so truly sympathize. When a man, in dashing against society and its laws, has totally wrecked himself, and has fallen so low that all others turn from him in scorn or loathing, his mother will



still cling to him. Only the Son of God, who for man's sake sounded all the depths of agony and woe, can exceed—or even equal—a mother's love.

In a very important sense one's mother is always with him. Though she may have slept for half a century in her grave she is not forgotten, and sometimes the faded past is strangely revived, with her image as the center around which it moves.

A mother's death, therefore, is never a commonplace event. It can never be an ordinary bereavement. It can never fail to rob the landscape of life of its most endearing figure. Something henceforth will be wanting in the charm of every season; some chord will henceforth be wanting in all earthly music. When one's mother is dead there must henceforth be an incompleteness in life that must look beyond the mysterious horizon whither she vanished for that which will restore perfection.

—REV. J. E. ADAMS.

### MOTHER IS RESTING.

THE long, rough road is ended  
Her weary feet have pressed;  
How rough to her weak footsteps,  
Perhaps we never guessed;  
But with the weary journey  
She'll be no more distressed.  
The face we bend and softly kiss  
Bears no impress but that of bliss.

We know that many pages  
Within the book of years  
She has perused with anguish,  
Amid her falling tears;  
That partings, change, and doubting  
Have caused her many fears.  
Forgotten now each pang of woe,  
No grief again her soul will know.

We gaze at her dear features,  
Within the casket bound,  
And think that she is dwelling  
Where changeless peace is found,  
That there no painful partings  
Her loving heart will wound;  
And, weeping for her, "loved and gone,"  
We gather strength to walk alone—

Along the way before us,  
Whither—we do not know;  
It may be strewn with blessings,  
And pleasures we may know,  
Or, thickly set with dangers,  
May bring us naught but woe.  
Yet, o'er life's pathway she has come,  
At last, unto her heavenly home.

## THE DEATH OF MY MOTHER.

It is impossible to tell here all that she said to us, her children, to her husband, to her neighbors. Her mind was clear as the morning light. Her rest in God was perfect. Her confident hope was undimmed. The heaven she had lived for, and the spirit and life of which she had herself illustrated, was now opening for her triumphant entrance.

The theme she most dwelt upon was that of a holy life. She had made no profession of a "higher life," of a "perfect love," of a "second blessing;" but she had so lived for long years that when she repeated again and again the words, "Live holy! live holy!" to everyone at her bedside, the full force of the divine counsel and her fitness to speak it were felt by all. She sent farewell messages to absent neighbors. The humblest and the poorest of them she had through the years visited and befriended. She said, "I love them all." Several times she exclaimed, "God is love!" and "Jesus is precious!" . . .

"Do you fear death?" my father asked.

With a smile I shall never forget, she replied emphatically, "No!" "But," she added, "it is a solemn thing to die, and to stand before a pure and holy God."

And now the struggle seemed about over. My father addressed her, and she started and fixed

her eyes on him. He asked, "Is Jesus still precious?" She did not appear to understand or hear him. He repeated the question in a louder voice, and then again. All at once her face became radiant. Her old sweet smile came back. Her full energy of life seemed to be restored. The flashing of light from above seemed to transfigure her face, and with emphasis she said, pronouncing every word with great distinctness, "O, yes, Jesus is precious!" Then in a soft voice, but full of rapture, she said, "Glory, glory, glory!"

With a smile on her dear lips, she said, as though responding to invisible attendants, "Come, come, come!" and thus my mother died—to live forever!

—BISHOP VINCENT, IN "MY MOTHER."

## THE TEARLESS LAND.

OUR floral forget-me-nots blossom, and die  
When the winds of the autumn sweep chillingly by;  
But the heart's bright forget-me-nots never shall  
fade

When under the white drifts our loved ones are laid;  
And the days, as they fly o'er the dial of time,  
Are bringing us nearer to that brighter clime  
Where we shall again our best loved ones embrace  
And the glories of home shall earth's sorrows efface.

We weave from fair blossoms a cross and a crown,  
And on the cold coffin we lay them both down;

'Tis all we can do; we'll adorn the fair clay  
Ere under the white drifts we lay it away.  
But the days, as they fly o'er the dial of time,  
Are bringing us nearer to that brighter clime  
Where the crowns are not leaves that must wither  
and mold,  
But they sparkle with jewels and glisten with gold.  
We sing our sweet hymns round the slumbering  
clay  
Ere under the white drifts we lay it away;  
And we lift our dim eyes to the kingdom above,  
Unto Him who chastiseth us only in love.  
O! the days, as they fly o'er the dial of time,  
Are bringing us nearer to that brighter clime  
Where the songs of the blest with the sainted we'll  
sing  
At the feet of our Prophet, our Priest, and our King.  
We bury the dead we so love from our sight,  
While a star beameth forth from the depths of our  
night;  
It comforts the heart, and dispelleth the gloom,  
As we follow the dead to the rest of the tomb.  
O! the days, as they fly o'er the dial of time,  
Are bringing us nearer to that brighter clime  
Where "the King in his beauty," the Bethlehem  
Star,  
Shall cheer us forever in kingdoms afar.

## I SHALL BE SATISFIED.

When I shall wake in that fair morn of morns,  
After whose dawning never night returns,  
And with whose glory day eternal burns,  
I shall be satisfied.

When I shall see thy glory face to face,  
When in thine arms thou wilt thy child embrace,  
When thou shalt open all thy stores of grace,  
I shall be satisfied.

When I shall meet with those whom I have loved,  
Clasp in my eager arms the long removed,  
And find how faithful thou to me hast proved,  
I shall be satisfied.

When this vile body shall arise again,  
Purged by thy power from every taint and stain,  
Delivered from all weakness and all pain,  
I shall be satisfied.

When I shall gaze upon the face of Him  
Who for me died, with eye no longer dim,  
And praise him with the everlasting hymn,  
I shall be satisfied.

When I shall call to mind the long, long past,  
With clouds and storms and shadows overcast,  
And know that I am blest and saved at last,  
I shall be satisfied.

When every enemy shall disappear,  
The unbelief, the darkness, and the fear,  
When thou shalt smooth the brow and wipe the tear,  
I shall be satisfied.

When every vanity shall pass away,  
And all be real, and all without decay,  
In that sweet dawning of eternal day,  
I shall be satisfied.

—HORATIUS BONAR.

### IN SHADOW LAND.

IN shadow land I wander far,  
Without the clasp of that dear hand  
Whose mother-love was like a star  
In shadow land.

Her soul has reached the shining strand,  
Where waves that roll from death's dark bar  
Lapse into light and music grand  
In shadow land.

*She* dwells where darkness cannot mar  
The hills of God, by glory spanned ;  
*I* roam where Grief's gray memories are,  
In shadow land.

—WILLIAM H. HAYNE.

## THE SHORE OF ETERNITY.

ALONE! to land alone upon that shore,  
With no one sight that we have seen before;  
    Things of a different hue,  
    And the sounds all new,  
And fragrances so sweet the soul may faint.  
Alone! O, that first hour of being a saint!

Alone! to land alone upon that shore,  
On which no wavelets lisp, no billows roar,  
    Perhaps no shape of ground  
    Perhaps no sight or sound,  
No forms of earth our fancies to arrange—  
But to begin alone that mighty change!

Alone! to land alone upon that shore,  
Knowing so well we can return no more;  
    No voice or face of friend,  
    None with us to attend  
Our disembarking on that awful strand,  
But to arrive alone in such a land!

Alone! to land alone upon that shore!  
To begin alone to live forevermore,  
    To have no one to teach  
    The manners or the speech  
Of that new life, or put us at our ease—  
O that we might die in pairs or companies!



Alone? the God we know is on that shore,  
The God of whose attractions we know more  
    Than of those who may appear  
    Nearest and dearest here;  
O, is he not the lifelong friend we know  
More privately than any friend below?

Alone! the God we trust is on that shore,  
The Faithful One whom we have trusted more,  
    In trials and in woes,  
    Than we have trusted those  
On whom we leaned most in our earthly strife;  
O! we shall trust him more in that new life!

Alone! the God we love is on that shore—  
Love not enough, yet whom we love far more,  
    And whom we loved all through,  
    And with a love more true  
Than other loves, yet now shall love him more.  
True love of him begins upon that shore!

So not alone we land upon that shore;  
'Twill be as though we had been there before;  
    We shall meet more we know  
    Than we can meet below,  
And find our rest like some returning dove,  
And be at home at once with our eternal love!

—F. W. FABER.

## SAFE AT HOME.

THE world need never shed a tear for its sainted dead. They are safe as the harvest is when the farmer has bound it into sheaves and stored it, or as the roses are when the gardener has wrapped their roots in straw and housed them from the storm. They are safe as larks are that fly singing from the green earth out of reach of the huntsman's snare and the aim of the cruel sportsman. They are safe as warriors are who march beneath worn battle flags no more, but sit down with conquerors to festivals of song and wine. They are safe as young lambs are when shepherds fold them from the blast and carry them over rough places in tender arms. Weep for the living all you choose, and let your tears be unstayed above the dying bed where your darlings lie like wreaths of fading snow beneath the glance of Death, but if you believe in God and hold any faith in heaven never shed a tear for the blessed and happy dead. Christianity gives the lie to its belief when it garbs itself in sables and mourns without comfort for those who have exchanged the inn for the palace, the wilderness for the land of peace and plenty.—AMBER.

# THE AGED.

I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.—2 Tim. 4. 6-8.

Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace ; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.—Gen. 15. 15.

Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.—Job 5. 26.

I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ ; which is far better.—Phil. 1. 23.

Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

—Heb. 13. 14.

Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty : they shall behold the land that is very far off.—Isa. 33. 17.

I know that my Redeemer liveth.—Job 19. 25.

## GOOD NIGHT.

SLEEP on, beloved, sleep and take thy rest;  
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast;  
We love thee well, but Jesus loves thee best—  
    Good night! Good night! Good night!

Calm is thy slumber as an infant's sleep;  
But thou shalt wake no more to toil and weep;  
Thine is a perfect rest, secure and deep—  
    Good night! Good night! Good night!

Until the shadows from this earth are cast,  
Until He gathers in his sheaves at last,  
Until the twilight gloom be overpast—  
    Good night! Good night! Good night!

Until the Easter glory lights the skies,  
Until the dead in Jesus shall arise,  
And he shall come, but not in lowly guise—  
    Good night! Good night! Good night!

Until made beautiful by love divine,  
Thou, in the likeness of thy Lord, shall shine,  
And he shall bring that golden crown of thine—  
    Good night! Good night! Good night!

Only "Good night," beloved—not "Farewell!"  
A little while, and all his saints shall dwell  
In hallowed union indivisible—  
    Good night! Good night! Good night!

Until we meet again before His throne,  
Clothed in the spotless robe he gives his own,  
Until we know even as we are known—

Good night! Good night! Good night!

—*Anon.*

WITH thy rude plowshare, Death, turn up the sod,  
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow;  
This is the field and acre of our God,  
This is the place where human harvests grow!

THE graves grow thicker, and life's ways more bare,  
As years on years go by;  
Nay, thou hast more green gardens in thy care,  
And more stars in thy sky!  
No jubilees, few gladsome, festive hours,  
Form landmarks for my way,  
But heaven and earth, and saints and friends and  
flowers,  
Keep resurrection day.

—LYRA MYSTICA.

EXTRAORDINARY afflictions are not always the punishment of extraordinary sins, but sometimes the trial of extraordinary graces.

—MATTHEW HENRY.

AN aged Christian wrote in his diary: "I praise the Lord for every step of the way in which he has led me, for every loss and cross, sorrow and trial,

for every circumstance of my life, because by them all he has brought me where I can trust him in all things."

### REST, HOME, LIFE.

REST for the weary

In a land where toil shall cease,

Earth sad and dreary

Left for heaven's peace.

Rest from care and sadness,

Rest from pain and strife and woe;

There all joy and gladness

Spirits blest e'er know.

Home for the wayworn

On time's rough, tempestuous way,

Through glory's gates, borne

Up to endless day.

Home in heaven forever,

Home where wanderings all are o'er,

Where the ransomed never

Leave the Saviour more.

Life for the dying,

Whither death can never come,

Sorrow and sighing

Ne'er shall reach that home.

Life where tears shall vanish,

Life eternal, blissful, free;

Love all fears shall vanish,

God his saints shall see.

## AT THE LAST.

THE stream is calmest when it nears the tide,  
The flowers are sweetest at the eventide,  
The birds most musical at close of day,  
The saints divinest when they pass away.

Morning is holy, but a holier charm  
Lies folded up in Evening's robe of balm;  
And weary men must ever love her best,  
For morning calls to toil, but night to rest.

She comes from heaven, and on her wings doth bear  
A holy fragrance, like the breath of prayer;  
Footsteps of angels follow in her trace,  
To shut the weary eyes of Day in peace.

All things are hushed before her, as she throws  
O'er earth and sky her mantle of repose.  
There is a calmer beauty and a power  
That morning knows not in the evening's hour.

Until the evening we must weep and toil—  
Plow life's stern furrow and dig the woody soil,  
Tread with sad feet the rough and thorny way,  
And bear the heat and burden of the day.

O! when the sun is setting, may we glide  
Like summer evening down the golden tide,  
And leave behind us, as we pass away,  
Sweet starry twilight round our sleeping clay.

—*Anon.*



## THE FLOOD OF YEARS.

## BEYOND

That belt of darkness still the years roll on  
More gently, but with not less mighty sweep.  
They gather up again and softly bear  
All the sweet lives that late were overwhelmed  
And lost to sight—all that in them was good,  
Noble, and truly great and worthy of love—  
The lives of infants and ingenuous youths,  
Sages and saintly women who have made  
Their households happy—all are raised and borne  
By that great current on its onward sweep,  
Wandering and rippling with caressing waves  
Around green islands, fragrant with the breath  
Of flowers that never wither. So they pass,  
From stage to stage, along the shining course  
Of that fair river broadening like a sea.  
As its smooth eddies curl along their way,  
They bring old friends together; hands are clasped  
In joy unspeakable; the mother's arms  
Again are folded round the child she loved  
And lost. Old sorrows are forgotten now,  
Or but remembered to make sweet the hour  
That overpays them; wounded hearts that bled  
Or broke are healed forever. In the room  
Of their grief-shadowed Present there shall be  
A Present in whose reign no grief shall gnaw  
The heart, and never shall a tender tie

Be broken, in whose reign the eternal change  
That waits on growth and action shall proceed  
With everlasting Concord hand in hand.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan which moves  
To that mysterious realm where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him and lies down to pleasant dreams.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

### ONLY WAITING.

ONLY waiting, till the shadows  
Are a little longer grown;  
Only waiting, till the glimmer  
Of the day's last beam is flown;  
Till the night of earth is faded  
From the hearts once full of day;  
Till the stars of heaven are breaking  
Through the twilight soft and gray.

Only waiting, till the reapers  
Have the last sheaf gathered home;  
For the summer time is faded,  
And the autumn winds have come.

Quickly, reapers, gather quickly  
These last ripe hours of my heart,  
For the bloom of life is withered,  
And I hasten to depart.

—FRANCES L. MACE.

## FINAL VICTORY.

BEHOLD, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

—I COR. 15. 51-58.





Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Nov. 2005

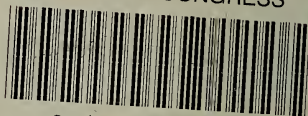
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